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NEWSRELEASE

February 25 , 2005

ONTARIO GOVERNMENT HELPING WOMEN GET BETTER JOBS *Promoting Women's Economic Independence*

QUEEN'S PARK – The Ontario government today announced funding that will enable women to receive pre-apprenticeship training in general carpentry at Georgian College in Barrie through the government's Women In Skilled Trades Program (WIST).

"Our government is committed to helping women learn the skills they need to secure good jobs and become economically independent," said Sandra Papatello, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues. "WIST is also helping to address Ontario's skills shortages by offering training in trades that are in high demand in specific areas."

Georgian College has delivered a number of different WIST courses in the past. This year the college will receive up to \$198,717 from the Ontario Women's Directorate to deliver the pre-apprenticeship training in the general carpentry course for up to 20 women. The course will begin in September.

The WIST program targets unemployed and low-income women and provides pre-apprenticeship training in a range of skilled trades. It includes in-school training and a paid on-the-job work placement with local employers. Government funding covers the women's tuition fees and other costs related to the program such as supplies.

"We have seen nearly 100 women complete the WIST program and I am pleased to report that most have found success in their new careers. Employers continue to support us with donations of equipment, industry tours, work placements and more," said Steve Lichty, Georgian's Dean of Community & Business Development.

The WIST program supports a variety of training programs at five other locations: New Home Service Technician/ General Carpentry at the Centre for Skills Development and Training in Burlington; Conestoga College in Guelph; Welding at La Cité collégiale in Hawkesbury; Native Residential Construction at Northern College in Moosonee; and Industrial Electrician at Algonquin College in Ottawa.

For further information about the program at Georgian College call Sarah Peake at 705-728-1968, ext. 1221, or visit www.georgianc.on.ca

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